

CHAPTER VI: COMMUNITY DESIGN



6.1 COMMUNITY DESIGN CONCEPT

Context

This chapter is intended to define the type of community envisioned for Placer Vineyards. This chapter sets the goals, policies, and design guidelines that ensure the creation of a safe, high quality, and livable environment for the existing and new residents of Placer Vineyards. The “Community Design” chapter along with those standards and guidelines in other chapters of the Specific Plan are intended to ensure a cohesive and unique character for Placer Vineyards, while allowing flexibility for individual property owners to develop their own unique brand of housing types and distinct neighborhoods.

The contents of this chapter shall be used in concert with the standards and guidelines found elsewhere in the Specific Plan. Refer also to the following chapters of the Specific Plan for information regarding the design of the Placer Vineyards community:

- ♦ Chapter III, “Land Use,” introduces the land use plan and describes the land uses in the community;
- ♦ Chapter V, “Transportation and Circulation,” provides the design standards and guidelines related to the design of the streets and trails within the Placer Vineyards site;
- ♦ Chapter VII, “Parks and Open Space,” describes the parks and open space network for Placer Vineyards;
- ♦ Chapter VIII, “Public Utilities and Services,” provides information on the design of the infrastructure system serving the Plan Area as well as the schools, sheriff, fire protection, government services and other community serving facilities;
- ♦ Chapter IX, “Implementation,” discusses the administration and implementation steps required to achieve the goals and regulations set forth in this Specific Plan;
- ♦ Appendix A, “Land Use and Development Standards,” further defines the intensity and density of development and permitted uses allowed in each of the land use districts; and
- ♦ Appendix B, “Recommended Plant List,” provides a list of the recommended trees, shrubs, vines, and ground covers for Placer Vineyards.

Blueprint Plan Implementation

This Specific Plan is guided by Smart Growth principles similar to the principles in the SACOG Blueprint Plan. This chapter brings together these principles into the site and architectural design details of the community that help shape and define the Placer Vineyards community. These design details include the relationship of buildings to the street, setbacks, placement of garages, sidewalks, landscaping, building design, and the design of the public right-of-way (sidewalks, streets, paths, and bike lanes). Good site and architectural design, coupled with community amenities and transportation options enhance the pedestrian quality, attractiveness of living in a compact community, and facilitate walking or biking to work and to other destinations.



Purpose

In general, the standards and guidelines of the Specific Plan are intended to be consistent with adopted County goals and policies. This chapter of the Specific Plan establishes specific standards for the Plan Area that may be unique or different from the *Placer County Design Guidelines* and *Placer County Landscape Design Guidelines*. This chapter addresses the overall vision for Placer Vineyards and will serve to implement and direct development specific to the Placer Vineyards site.

Application of these standards and guidelines ensures that development that may occur over an extended period of time is high quality. The Placer Vineyards development will result in distinct neighborhoods and development areas with unique site and landscape characteristics. Different areas of the site will be united by a common network of streets, trails, and greenways; connected by common access to an extensive system of parks, open space, schools, employment, public facilities, and urban centers; and united by a townscape vocabulary achieved through the consistent treatment of common site and building design elements.

COMMUNITY DESIGN

The standards and guidelines in this chapter address the common design elements, the centers, and unique residential neighborhoods in Placer Vineyards. It is organized into the following sections:

6.2 Community-wide Design Elements

- 6.2.1 Landscape Design
- 6.2.2 Streetscapes
- 6.2.3 Community Gateways
- 6.2.4 Signage Systems
- 6.2.5 Lighting

6.3 Centers of Activity

- 6.3.1 Design of Activity Centers
- 6.3.2 Town Center
- 6.3.3 Village Centers
- 6.3.4 Commercial Centers
- 6.3.5 Base Line Road Regional Commercial Corridor
- 6.3.6 Neighborhood Commercial Centers

6.4 Residential Neighborhoods

- 6.4.1 General Lot Design Standards
- 6.4.2 Residential Design
- 6.4.3 Walls, Fences and Screening

The standards and guidelines in this chapter will be used to assist Planning staff, the Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors in evaluating the merit of development proposals. To aid in the interpretation of policies and guidelines in this chapter, the following rules apply:

- ♦ Policy statements and design standards express a County requirement and use the terms, “shall” or “must.”
- ♦ Design guidelines are qualitative and express a design intent through descriptions and illustrations, with flexibility for interpretation so long as the intent of the guidelines is upheld. Guideline statements use the words “should,” “may,” “encouraged,” and “discouraged.”
- ♦ Guideline statements using the words “encouraged” or “discouraged” are meant to express, respectively, a more or less desirable design solution.

- ♦ Guidelines that employ the word “should” are intended to express the County’s desire and expectation. An alternative measure or approach may be considered, however, if it meets or exceeds the intent of the design guideline. Guidelines that include “may” allow for flexibility and expresses that alternative measures or approaches can be used to satisfy the intent.

Should individual projects differ in some respects but stay substantially consistent with the intent of these design standards, minor deviations may be allowed. These determinations will be made at the discretion of the Planning Director or the Planning Commission. For design items that are specified in exhibits, text, and/or adopted goals and policies of the Specific Plan, modifications may require an amendment to the Specific Plan. Minor changes to an approved project that are consistent with original approvals may be approved by the Planning Director. Refer to Chapter IX, “Implementation,” for the administrative procedures to follow.

6.2 COMMUNITY-WIDE DESIGN ELEMENTS

This section outlines the goals and policies applicable to plan elements that are to be consistent across the entire Plan Area. For certain elements (i.e. parks, open space, streets) the text may also refer to design standards contained in other associated chapters of this Specific Plan.

6.2.1 LANDSCAPE DESIGN

The designed landscape creates the framework for common elements that knit the community together. These elements are intended to bring cohesiveness to the community, to engage the natural vegetation and topography of the site, to enhance the livability and identity of the community, and to provide transitions to adjacent sites and land uses.

- Goal 6.1** Provide a consistent and visually cohesive landscape throughout the Plan Area as well as provide identity to individual neighborhoods.
- Goal 6.2** Define and maintain a landscape and architectural style for the Plan Area.
- Goal 6.3** Provide for views from the road to community features such as creeks, wetlands, major tree groves, and other open space on the site.
- Goal 6.4** Put in place a designed landscape that utilizes a plant palette that is visually attractive, varied and either uses recycled or reclaimed water or minimizes water use.

Policy 6.1 Landscape Design and Landscape Master Plans.

In order to ensure the implementation of a cohesive image for the community, a detailed Landscape Master Plan shall be developed and approved by the County. This Master Plan shall address the design of streetscapes, entries, and other image features. The Landscape Master Plan and the Park and Recreation Master Plan (see Chapter 7, "Parks and Open Space") shall complement each other and together shall define the public landscape areas of the community. The Landscape Master Plan shall be guided by the following features:

- 1. The landscape design treatment for Placer Vineyards shall consider the context, historical land use, and ecology of the region. Design elements consistent with the historic rural image of the area including use of stone, wood, timber arbors and trellises, and rural fencing types are encouraged.*
- 2. Use landscape materials, trees, shrubs, and ground cover that are native to the area, have low water use, and fit into the local environmental conditions. Refer to Appendix B, "Recommended Plant List."*
- 3. Use colorful ornamental landscaping as accents at entryways, at special park and open space areas, and as image elements in the overall landscape.*
- 4. The streetscape designs described in the following sections of this chapter and the conceptual design figures that accompany them will be further refined and modified during the preparation of the Landscape Master Plan.*

Policy 6.2 View Protection.

Landscape elements shall be designed to create vistas and frame views of important community features, such as natural site features, significant buildings, or landmarks.

Policy 6.3 Natural Resource Preservation.

Where possible, open space areas shall interconnect with the oak woodlands, grasslands, wetlands, and other natural resources in the Plan Area.

Policy 6.4 Recommended Plant Palette.

Appendix B of this Specific Plan contains a list of plants recommended for use in Placer Vineyards. This list should be used when designing open space, landscape buffer corridors, streetscapes, gateways, and parks. Plants similar to those listed in the table may also be used, subject to County review and approval.

6.2.2 STREETSCAPES

The streetscape is one of the major visual elements that can help tie the community together in a consistent theme and quality of experience. Streetscape design is concerned with the design of the "public realm" or the area that stretches from the public streets to the building face. Streetscape design includes the selection of landscaping along the street and front yards and includes pedestrian amenities along the public right-of-way such as seating, lighting, and pedestrian furniture. Streetscape design guidelines apply to street corridors and along landscape buffers, medians, and gateways.

Trees are a major component of the streetscape design and livability of the Placer Vineyards community. Trees provide an attractive setting for walking and bicycle use, shade the sidewalks, street surface, and adjoining buildings; and improve the air quality and overall environment of the neighborhood. The streetscape design within the Plan Area is intended to provide a unified design and character for the project.

The guidelines presented in this section complement the roadway design standards found in Chapter V.

Goal 6.5 Create an attractive and inviting setting for the "public realm" that supports an active and vital mixed-use community. Features will include trees, shrubs, and ground cover planting, as well as trails, paths, monument signs, and other architectural amenities.

Goal 6.6 Design streetscapes along thoroughfares and arterials with a more spacious character to the public realm, consistent with the size and width of the street corridor, the volume and speed of traffic, and the amount and type of pedestrian activity on the street.

Goal 6.7 Create a continuous canopy of tree coverage throughout Placer Vineyards that establishes a strong and attractive community identity and provides shade.

Policy 6.5 Landscape Corridors on Major Streets.

Street landscape corridors will be developed along thoroughfares and arterials (i.e., Watt Avenue, Dyer Lane, and 16th Street; see Figures 6.1 and 6.2) and along major collector streets.

- 1. These parkways are wide and heavily landscaped with double rows of street trees, ground cover, and flowering accent vegetation.*
- 2. Walkways shall be designed as joint-use pedestrian and bicycle paths running through the parkway.*

3. *The streetscapes shall also provide linkages to neighboring open spaces, parks, schools, and major activity nodes, allowing for pedestrian and bicycle circulation as well as for other passive recreational and educational opportunities.*
4. *The corridors will have walks and trails separated from the streets. Landscaping will be expanded at entries to the development and blended in with the adjoining park sites and open space areas.*

Policy 6.6 Street Landscape Corridor Design.

Street landscape corridors shall be designed with different plant palettes to give a unique character to the streets. Landscaping along roadway corridors shall provide a unifying element to a neighborhood. Refer to Appendix B for a list of recommended streetscape trees, shrubs, vines, and ground covers, and Figures 6.1 through 6.2 for sample street corridor designs for Base Line Road and Watt Avenue.

1. *Thoroughfares: Base Line Road, Watt Avenue and Arterial Streets: Dyer Lane and 16th Street. Thoroughfares (see Figures 5.3-A, B) will have a 50-foot landscaped setback buffer and 20-foot median throughout the project area. Arterial streets (see Figure 5.3-D and E) will include a 35-foot landscape setback on both sides of the street and a 14-foot planted median. Landscape buffers will include earthen berms and plants, deciduous trees, evergreen trees, and drought-tolerant shrubs and ground covers. Berms and plants, such as 3-4-foot tall hedges, should be used to screen parking areas and/or sound walls.*

For thoroughfares and arterial streets, a row of trees for shade with drought-tolerant shrubs and ground covers will be planted in the road medians. Low drought-tolerant plants shall be installed as temporary landscaping in the future BRT right-of-way on Watt Avenue. Deciduous and evergreen canopy trees will be planted between curbs and sidewalks, with evergreen screen trees placed between sidewalks and residential walls. Landscaping shall provide for a consistent use of plant materials for the thoroughfares and each arterial street.

Unless recycled water is used for irrigation, irrigated turf will be limited to 25% of the total landscape corridor area. Turf areas will be limited to accent areas near intersections, project signage, buildings, and areas between the back of the curb and sidewalks.

2. *Major Collector Streets: Palladay Road, Tanwood Avenue, 14th Street. Select collector streets, as shown in Figure 5.3, Section F, will be landscaped with a 20-foot landscape setback area. A single, large deciduous canopy tree or other thematic landscape combination should be established per street. The same tree or repetition of trees will be planted within landscaped areas on both sides of the street at regular intervals for the entire road segment. In addition, other planting will consist of drought-tolerant ground covers, vines, and shrubs to screen walls or fences that abut the collector street landscape areas.*
3. *Minor Collector Streets and Local Streets. Local streets will be landscaped with a single, large deciduous canopy tree planted at regular intervals (at approximately 25-30-foot intervals or at a distance that provides appropriate spacing for the type of tree selected) on both sides of the street for the entire length of the road. In addition, other planting will consist of ground covers, vines, and shrubs to screen walls that "side-on" to local streets (see Figure 5.3, Sections G, H, R1 through R3, R5, and R6 for typical street cross sections).*
4. *Residential Alleys. All unpaved alley setback areas shall be landscaped.*

Policy 6.7 Street Tree Design.

Street tree planting throughout Placer Vineyards will vary depending on the type and size of each street and the desired character of the individual neighborhoods. Street tree conditions will serve as visual screens and buffers from development.

1. *In general, street trees shall be planted at regular intervals (approximately 25-30 feet apart), depending on the type of tree selected, to create a shaded canopy along the pedestrian travel way (see Appendix B for a recommended plant palette).*
2. *Street tree planting shall also be modified to incorporate existing trees and native oaks, when possible.*
3. *Street trees along major roadways shall be larger, scaled in relation to the street corridor and automobile travelers. Along thoroughfare and arterial streets, the dominant tree specified will be used 70% of the time.*
4. *Neighborhood streets shall be designed to include one row of large deciduous canopy trees.*

Figure 6.1 Conceptual Base Line Road Landscape Corridor

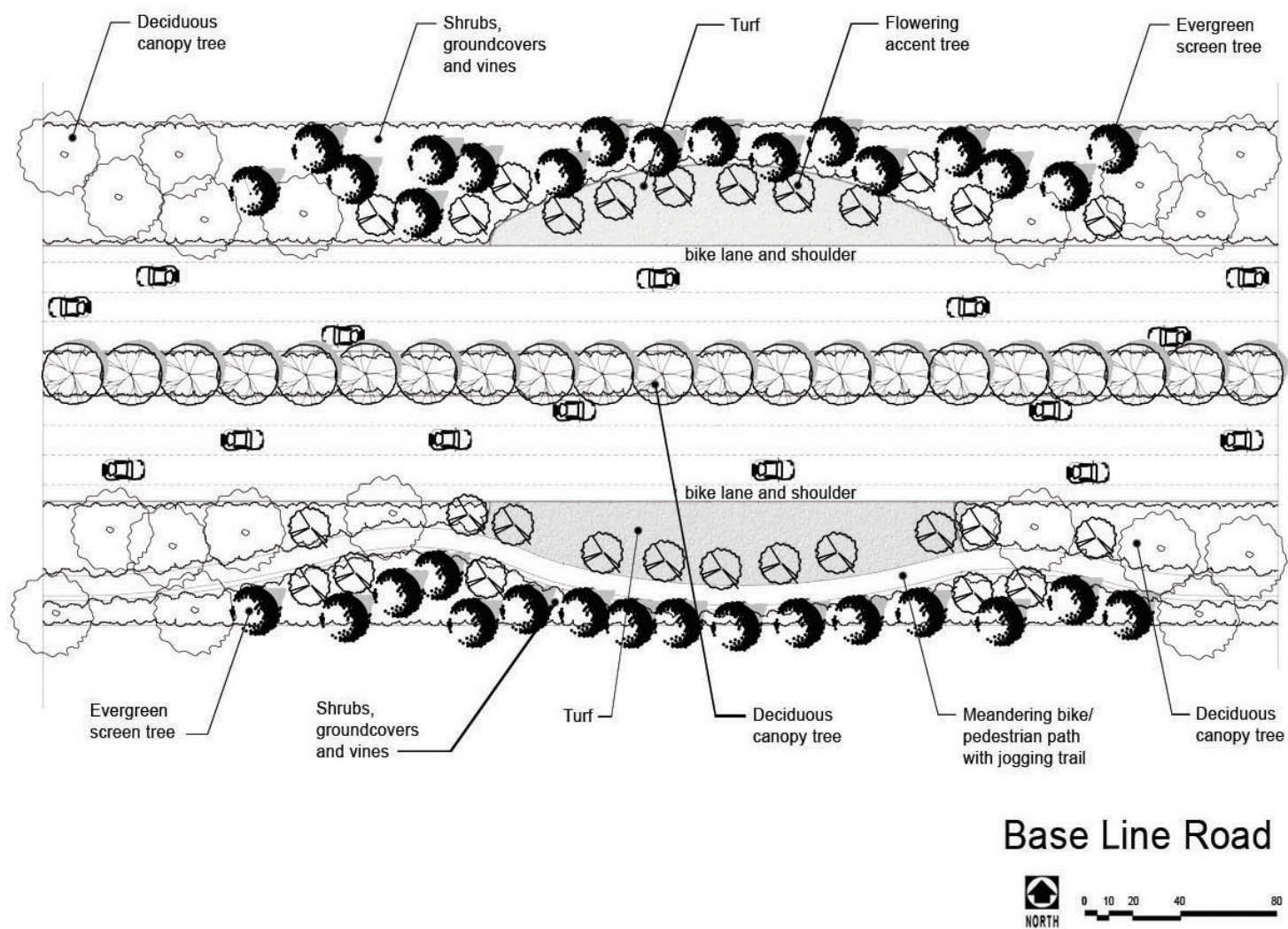
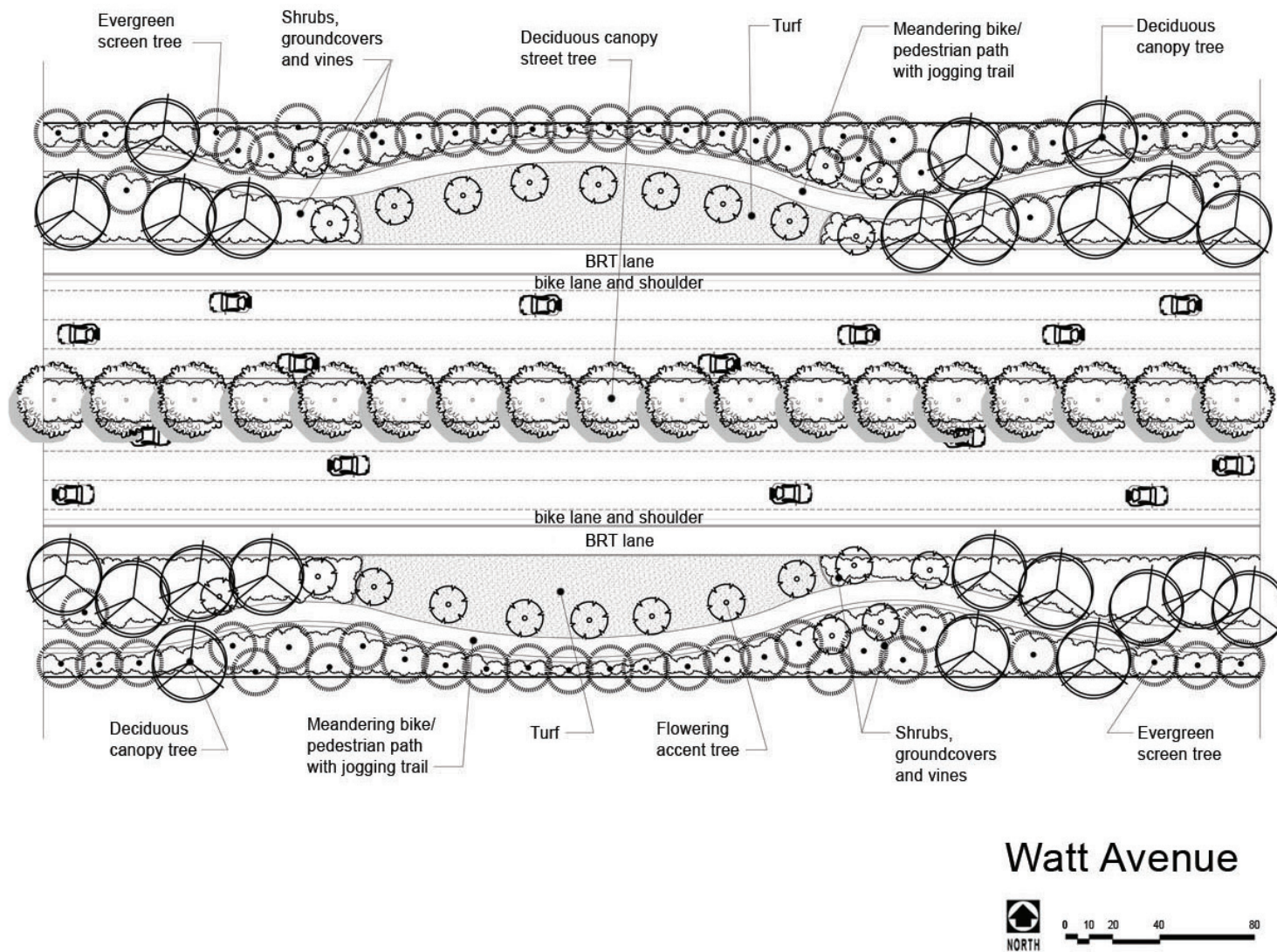


Figure 6.2 Conceptual Watt Avenue Landscape Corridor



Street Tree Design Guidelines

1. The size and spacing of street trees can help identify the street classification and function. In general, thoroughfares and arterials should be landscaped with larger canopy street trees and spaced accordingly. Collectors should be planted with different, smaller tree species, and local neighborhood street trees should be planted with yet another tree type.
2. Deciduous canopy trees and low ground cover should be placed in landscaped areas between the curb and sidewalk, while evergreen trees, shrubs, and vines should be located in landscaped areas between the sidewalk and walls or buildings. Trees should be planted with sufficient spacing to create full coverage and to allow for mature growth.
3. Street tree selection and plant locations should vary along the major thoroughfares, such as Watt Avenue and Dyer Lane, to create a naturalistic feel to the street corridors.
4. Tree selection should reflect the unique character of each neighborhood or street. Trees should be planted to ensure the spatial continuity of the street. Street trees should provide a large canopy with shape as well as color, variety, and accent.
5. Accent trees with color and seasonal flowering should be planted in clusters that exhibit interest and highlight intersections, entry points, or important destinations.
6. Street tree selection should reflect the environmental characteristics of the region. Low maintenance and drought-tolerant species are recommended.
7. Selected street trees species should have the ability to thrive in urban conditions where tree roots are often impacted by sidewalks and other obstacles such as underground utility lines and vaults.

Sidewalk and Street-Side Trail Design Guidelines

General guidelines for sidewalks and trails along major streets include:

1. Highly visible and lighted crosswalks should be located at all major intersections. Alternative surface materials are encouraged at crosswalks;
2. Sidewalks should have a minimum clear path of 5 feet in Placer Vineyards for pedestrian and wheelchair access;
3. Streetscape elements such as seating, benches, bike racks, signage, fire hydrants, news racks, bus shelters, lighting, planters, trees, and utility poles and boxes should be located in landscape lots or sidewalks. It is desirable to combine these elements when feasible;
4. Privately maintained areas adjacent to sidewalks should enhance the public space. Materials used for walls, fences, and pavement should be coordinated with and complement the streetscape design; and
5. Streetscape elements and paving materials should be of high quality to minimize maintenance. The quality of material and surface pattern contributes to the pedestrian experience.

6.2.3 COMMUNITY GATEWAYS

The gateways into the community help define separate and distinct areas of the project, while providing for a sense of arrival. Placer Vineyards is designed with a series of community and neighborhood entry points. The entryway concept provides a hierarchy of entryway experiences and, when coordinated with the street system, will help orient visitors and community residents to the site. Entryway designs should complement the overall image and style of Placer Vineyards community, and will be further defined in the *Landscape Master Plan*. Placer Vineyards will incorporate primary entries at major arterials throughout the project and minor entry points at other streets (see Figure 6.4).

Goal 6.8 Create attractive gateway features that help establish a distinct identity for the Placer Vineyards community and its neighborhoods and helps orient visitors to the site.

Goal 6.9 Use a consistent application of elements such as landscaping, signage, fencing, and lighting at key entrances to the community.

Policy 6.8 Community Gateway Signage.

Community gateway signage will consist of monument signs set in medians or on one or both sides of the street. These monument signs shall be located outside the right-of-way when they are proposed along the sides of streets and may be incorporated into walls or other architectural features to emphasize the transition. A complete signage program design for Placer Vineyards will be developed as a part of the Landscape Master Plan (see Policy 6.1).

Policy 6.9 Minor Entries.

Minor entries shall be located outside the right-of-way at intersections to the internal street system to identify and mark the transition into residential neighborhoods in Placer Vineyards. Entries are small-scale landscape or architectural features, signs, or monuments at the street corners that may include special lighting, flowering plants, or public art. These features are smaller in scale than community entries and serve as landmarks that give special identity and character to each residential neighborhood or block.

Policy 6.10 Community Gateway Theme.

All entries shall include thematic architectural or landscape design elements that incorporate a special landmark feature or public art to identity destinations in the community, representative of the Placer Vineyards character. Public art shall be subject to Design/Site Review approval.

Policy 6.11 Northern Community Gateways and Entries.

The primary northern entries will be provided on Base Line Road at Dyer Lane, 16th Street, Watt Avenue, and East Dyer Lane. Minor entries will be located at other additional collector roadways intersecting Base Line Road, as indicated in Figure 6.3.

Policy 6.12 Southern Community Gateways and Entries.

South of the project site, primary entries will be located along the Sacramento/Placer County Line at 16th Street, Tamwood Avenue, and at Watt Avenue where it intersects with Dry Creek (see Figure 6.3).

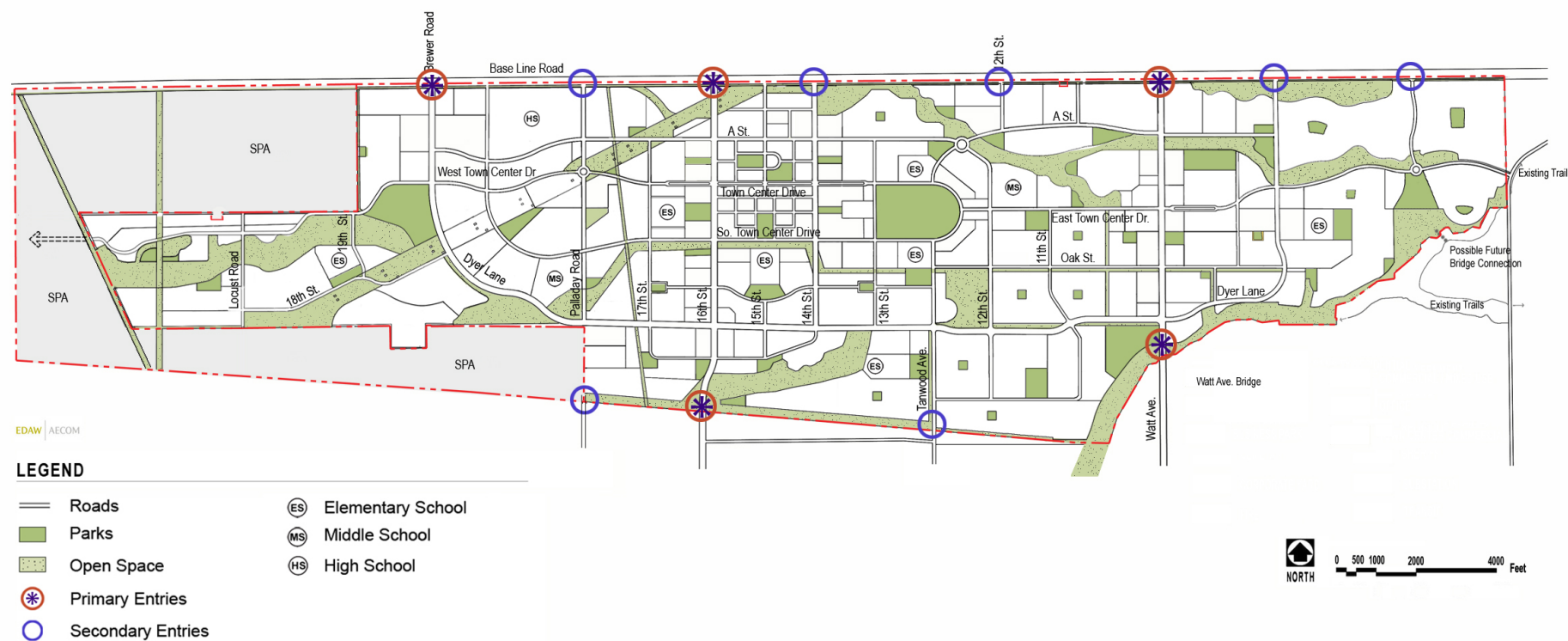
Policy 6.13 Lighting of Entryway Signs.

Lighting of entry signs shall consist of either indirect lighting with the light source at ground level or internal halo-type lighting. In both cases, the lighting source shall not be visible from traveled roadways.



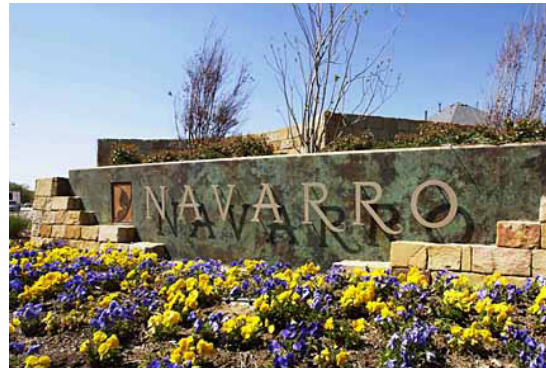
Entries may be identified using landmark features or public art

Figure 6.3 Community Gateway Site Location Diagram



Design Guidelines for Community Gateways and Entries

1. Entries should be designed to represent the character of Placer Vineyards.
2. Entries should be treated with similar materials, colors, and forms.
3. Entries should be designed to highlight the transition into Placer Vineyards with taller vertical elements.
4. Entry walls should be designed as low-profile monument signs.
5. The ground plane entering into the Placer Vineyards neighborhood core should be highlighted from the street with colored and textured paving.
6. Landscape materials, oak trees, and other planting should be formal groupings, to reinforce the signage and entryway features.
7. Landscaping should be carefully placed to avoid obscuring signage.
8. Up-lights and halo-lit signs and monuments should be integrated into entryway features.
9. Primary entry signs are not intended to be used for individual business advertisement.
10. Entry signs will be designed not to interfere with vehicle sight distances.



Community Gateway monument sign design



Use ground cover, shrubs and other plants to integrate monument signs into the overall site landscape



Minor entryway sign used to identify a residential neighborhood or district

Design Guidelines for Minor Entries

1. Minor entries should be designed with a consistent visual theme using similar materials, landscaping, lighting, and architectural forms.
2. The minor entries should be incorporated into the landscape areas outside the street rights-of-way. Features may include landscaping, signage, lighting, decorative walls, and other architectural forms that provide transition.
3. Designs should incorporate pedestrian streetscape elements and landscape materials that represent the area's urban, mixed-use character.
4. Surface textures and colored paving materials may be incorporated into the ground surface.
5. At the entry into mixed-use areas, land uses and building corners should exhibit a more active and pedestrian retail environment. Within the town center and commercial areas, entries should incorporate larger building setbacks, corner entry plazas, and storefront windows and doorways.
6. Minor entry signs should be designed to be low-profile, monument-type signs that do not interfere with vehicle sight distance.
7. Minor entry signs are not intended to be used for individual business advertisement.

6.2.4 SIGNAGE SYSTEMS

Signs and landmark features located throughout the Plan Area will help to establish a coordinated and consistent quality, character, and image for Placer Vineyards and aid residents and visitors in navigating through the community.

The intent of creating a system of permanent signs is to convey information regarding the names of streets, neighborhoods, particular locations, and community facilities. Permanent signs include community entry signs and features, neighborhood signs and entry landmarks, street signs, directional signs, and business identification signs. The complete signage program design for Placer Vineyards is not addressed in this Specific Plan but will be developed for review and approval by Placer County separately in more detail at a later date.

Goal 6.10 Create a coordinated and consistent quality of signage for the Placer Vineyards community.

Policy 6.14 General Sign Requirements.

All signage shall be subject to the approval of a sign permit by the Placer County Planning Department and shall conform with the sign standards of the Placer County Zoning Ordinance (see Sections 17.54.170 through 17.54.200), unless this is superseded by the adoption of a separate signage program for Placer Vineyards.

6.2.5 LIGHTING

Lighting throughout the Plan Area is an integral part of the overall community image and character. In addition to reinforcing the character of the town center, village centers, parks, and the streetscape, lighting helps to increase the safety and security of residents and users. The lighting design for Placer Vineyards is guided by the following goals and policies.

Goal 6.11 Provide sufficient lighting to increase the safety and security of residents and visitors to Placer Vineyards on its streets, parks, and pedestrian pathways. Provide lighting that is attractive and compatible with other design features in the community.

Goal 6.12 Maintain the spirit and intent of the Dark Skies standards (the ability to view the night sky) by protecting against glare and excess lighting; providing safe roadways for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians; and promoting efficient and cost-effective lighting.

Policy 6.15 General Lighting Requirements.

Lighting shall be designed and located to meet minimum, necessary ambient light levels for any given location consistent with public safety standards.

1. *Lighting shall occur at intersections, areas of major pedestrian activity, and building entries, and generally shall be minimized elsewhere.*
2. *Street lighting shall be directed and regularly spaced, and shall project light down to the road surface and away from the building.*
3. *Decorative pedestrian-scaled lighting fixtures shall be used in the town center, village centers, commercial centers, parks, and other major pedestrian activity areas.*
4. *The selection and design of lighting fixtures shall minimize glare and excess spillage onto neighboring properties. All street lights shall utilize cut-off fixtures to minimize visibility from adjacent areas of the community and public use areas.*

5. *No lighting shall blink, flash, or be of unusually high intensity or brightness.*
6. *Lighting fixtures shall be energy efficient and provide a balance between energy efficiency and pleasing light color and coverage. Avoid low-pressure sodium fixtures. Acceptable light sources include mercury vapor, metal halide, and similar sources.*

Policy 6.16 Street Lights.

Street lights on Base Line Road and Watt Avenue shall be simple cobra-head light fixtures, located particularly at major intersections. Street lights for collectors and local streets should be decorative fixtures that are compatible with character of the Placer Vineyards streetscape. The selection of street lights for Placer Vineyards will be addressed in the Landscape Master Plan.

1. **Color:** *The color of street light poles and fixtures shall be consistent throughout the community. All specified metals shall utilize anodized coatings, rather than painted colors.*
2. **Materials:** *Street light poles shall be either metal or wood fixtures.*



Cobra-head street lights shown in the background

3. **Town Center:** Street lighting in the town center shall consist of ornamental street lights flanking the roadways. Street lights shall be located in parallel pairs along the length of the street, spaced to provide illumination levels of 0.5 footcandle, and shall not exceed 14 feet in height.

4. **Village Centers:** Village centers shall use a design in the same design family as the ornamental street lights in the town center, however, each village center shall utilize a light fixture designed to give the center a unique character and identity.

5. **Base Line Road and Watt Avenue:** Street lights on Base Line Road and Watt Avenue shall be simple, single- or double-arm, cobra-head lights, spaced as required to maintain illumination levels of 1.75 footcandle, and shall not exceed 40 feet in height.

6. **Arterial Streets:** Street lights on arterial streets shall be selected decorative fixtures, spaced, as required, to maintain illumination levels of 1.0 footcandle on alternating sides of the street, and shall not exceed 25 feet in height.

7. **Collector and Local Residential Streets:** Street lighting on collector and local streets in residential neighborhoods shall be ornamental or decorative street light fixtures, spaced, as required, to maintain illumination levels of 0.5 footcandle on alternating sides of the street, and shall not exceed 14 feet in height.

8. **Neighborhood Entries:** Street lights at neighborhood entries shall consist of ornamental or decorative fixtures flanking the roadway, located in pairs, and shall not exceed 14 feet in height.



Ornamental streetlights in the town center



Banners on decorative, arterial streetlights



Residential streetlight



Streetlights and bollard lights along a pedestrian path.

Policy 6.17 Pedestrian Oriented Lighting.

Pedestrian oriented lighting will be provided within the town center, village centers, commercial centers, parks, and major pedestrian activity areas. Pedestrian lighting shall consist of smaller pole fixtures, spaced to maintain illumination levels of 0.5 footcandle, and shall not exceed 14 feet in height.

Design Guidelines for Pedestrian Oriented Lighting

1. Bollard light fixtures are also recommended along pedestrian paths of travel as an alternative to pole-mounted light fixtures.
2. With the exception of sports lighting, wood poles are recommended in parks and open spaces and along major pedestrian paths, in keeping with the more rural and rustic theme for Placer Vineyards.
3. Specialized pedestrian lighting should be used to distinguish differences in individual neighborhoods and areas within Placer Vineyards.
4. Pedestrian lighting should be incorporated into the landscape design along major pedestrian paths of travel at appropriate intervals to provide lighted coverage.
5. Bus shelters, telephone kiosks, and other site furnishings should be adequately lighted for security and functionality. Light sources shall be included in the structure of the furnishings.
6. Pedestrian lighting should be durable and easily maintained and of sufficient intensity to provide lighting without spilling over onto road rights-of-ways and adjoining properties, or conflicting with street lighting.

Policy 6.18 Recreation Areas and Athletic Facilities.

Lighting for athletic fields and court facilities shall be designed to minimize illumination and spillage onto neighboring uses and residential areas. Athletic facility lighting shall be provided only in the two community park facilities and the town center recreation center. Mercury vapor or metal halide lamps, mounted 30-50-feet high, are recommended.

Policy 6.19 Public Parking Lot Lighting.

Parking lot lights shall be no higher than necessary to provide efficient lighting of the parking areas and shall not exceed 25 feet in height for larger parking lots, including the base. Illumination levels shall be maintained at 1.0 footcandle. Spacing between light poles shall be determined by the required level of illumination.

1. The fixture design style and colors shall be compatible with the architectural design of the site.
2. Within the town center and village centers, the design and color of parking lot light fixtures, shall be consistent with the design of street lights.

Policy 6.20 Landscape Lighting.

Landscape lighting shall be limited to important landscape areas, entryway features, signage, or pedestrian areas.

1. The design of landscape light fixtures shall be hidden from direct view unless designed as an integral part of the area's design.
2. The light source shall be shielded from direct view at night, with the emphasis on the object or area being lighted. Up-lighting and

mood lighting in trees and landscaping can be effective design feature for special entries, signs, water features, and landmarks.

3. Landscape light fixtures shall be durable and easily maintained. For ease of maintenance, landscape light fixture types and lamps shall be consistent with landscape design and street lighting for each neighborhood.



Parking lot lighting design examples



Bollard light fixture integrated into site landscaping

Policy 6.21 Service Areas and Security Lighting.

Lighting in services areas shall be designed to avoid spillover onto adjacent properties and activity areas, and shielded from direct view of the light source at night.

1. Building-mounted flood light fixtures shall not be used unless the light source is completely shielded from public view.
2. Low-pressure sodium fixtures or other lighting types that contrast excessively with lighting in the surrounding use area shall be avoided unless completely shielded from public view. Mercury vapor, metal halide, and similar fixture types are permitted.

Policy 6.22 Building Identification and Street Number Lighting.

Lighting of building identification and street numbers on buildings shall be used to help locate buildings during evening hours.

1. Lighting of street identification or numbers shall be internally lit, back lit, or externally lit. External spot lighting is preferred.
2. Street number lighting shall be subdued and not contrast excessively with the surrounding area lighting.
3. Numbers and lighting shall be conveniently placed near the building entry and shall be visible from the street and adjoining parking lots.
4. Buildings placed back from and not visible from the street may use freestanding lighted monuments or small pedestrian pole lights with mounted street numbers to identify the street address of the buildings from the street.

6.3 ACTIVITY CENTERS

The centers of activity are the community gathering places that are specially designed to serve the Placer Vineyards community. See Figure 6.4 for the location of activity centers. Activity centers include the town center (see Section 6.3.3), the village centers (see Section 6.3.4), the regional commercial centers along Base Line Road (see Section 6.3.5), and the neighborhood commercial centers (see Section 6.3.6).

Special treatment is given to the design of these mixed-use neighborhood sites, with emphasis placed on creating a safe and pedestrian friendly setting with easy and convenient access by multiple means of transit. Commercial and other non-residential properties located within the centers of activity shall require Design/Site Review. All buildings and improvements proposed within the activity centers are subject to approval of a Design/Site Review agreement as outlined in Section 7.52.070 of the *Placer County Zoning Ordinance* and to Appendix A, “Land Use and Development Standards.”

6.3.1 GENERAL GOALS AND POLICIES FOR ACTIVITY CENTERS

Goal 6.13 Design for a variety of activity centers that serve their respective functions and add value to the communities where they exist through the provision of jobs, services, and economic activity.

Goal 6.14 Provide a range of housing close to commercial centers with paths that connect them.

Goal 6.15 Create attractive and comfortable outdoor, pedestrian activity areas that are adjacent to buildings, entries, and along major commercial streets.

Policy 6.23 Pedestrian Orientation.

Design elements that accommodate pedestrians and cyclists shall be equally treated or take precedence over elements that primarily accommodate automobiles, especially in the town center, village centers, neighborhood centers and access areas leading into parks, schools and other public facilities. Retail centers and commercial areas shall be designed to provide maximum pedestrian accessibility.

Policy 6.24 Density within Centers of Activity.

The town center, village centers, and Base Line Road commercial corridor should be established at sufficient densities to support express bus transit from Placer Vineyards and other neighborhood areas in the region.

Goal 6.16 Design parking areas that are in scale with and are visually subordinate to the developments they serve.

Policy 6.25 Parking Lot Shading.

New parking lots serving non-residential developments shall include tree planting designed to result in 50% shading of parking lot surface areas within 15 years. These shading requirements shall apply to all impervious surfaces on which a vehicle can drive including parking stalls, drives, and maneuvering areas within the property. Until such a time that Placer County adopts a Parking Lot Shading Ordinance, the County shall use the City of Sacramento Parking Lot Tree Shading Design and Maintenance Guidelines, June 17, 2003 edition to implement these requirements.

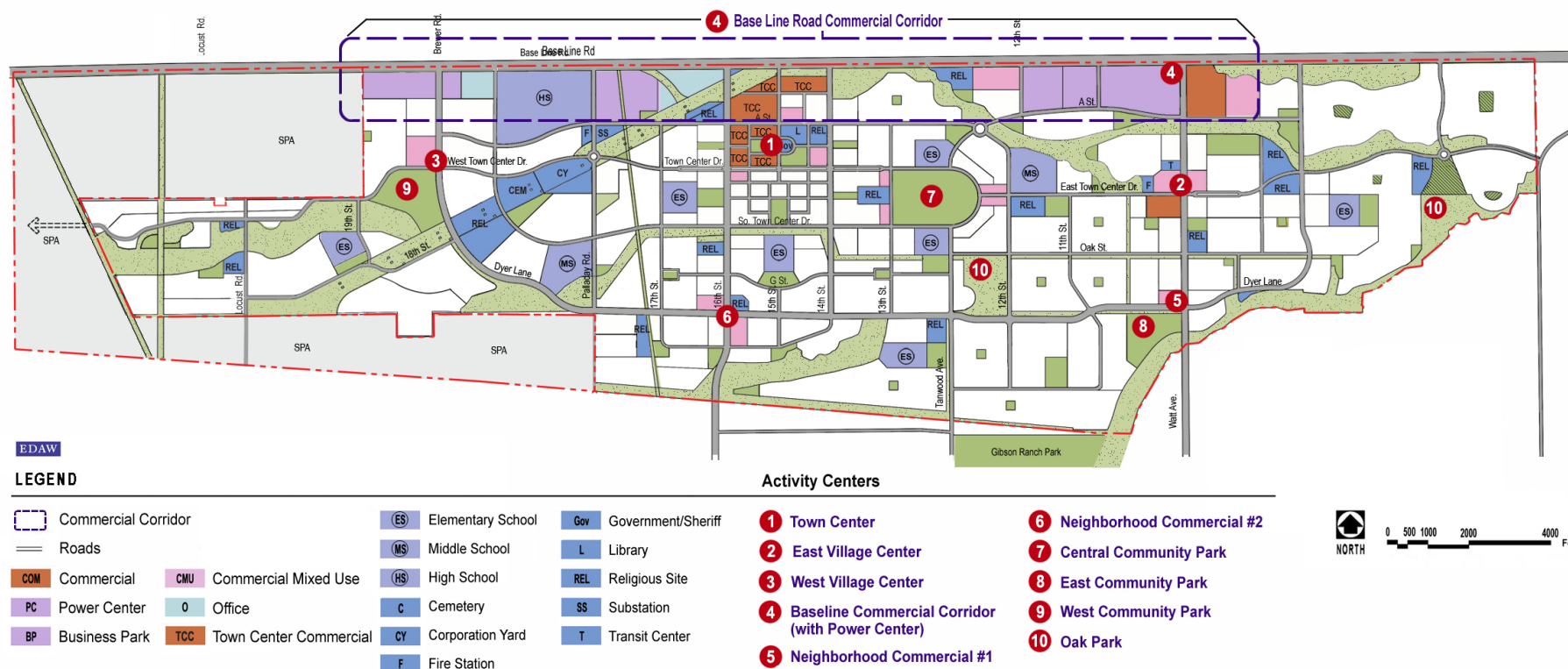
Goal 6.17 Design buildings whose architectural character contributes to the vitality and attractiveness of the districts, neighborhoods, shopping centers, and work places in the community.

Goal 6.18 The heights of buildings shall be related and proportional to the activities and surrounding context in which they are located.

Policy 6.26 Building Heights.

Taller buildings will be located along the major commercial nodes, at the town center and within the office and commercial areas along Base Line Road. Lower story buildings and less intense development will be located adjacent to existing neighborhoods in the Special Planning Area to provide appropriate transitions to more intense development at the center and along the major transportation corridors in the Plan Area.

Figure 6.4 Activity Centers Site Diagram



COMMUNITY DESIGN

6.3.2 GENERAL DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR ACTIVITY CENTERS

PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED SITE DESIGN GUIDELINES

The overall site design should be organized to encourage pedestrian use and activity.

1. Ground-floor commercial buildings should be oriented to plazas, parks, and pedestrian-oriented spaces and streets rather than to interior blocks or parking lots.
2. Street-level windows and numerous building entries, including arcades, porches, bays, and balconies are encouraged.
3. Walls of commercial establishments without an entry or a pedestrian route shall include windows and display areas, or should be lined with retail shops to provide visual interest to pedestrians.
4. Entries to small shops and offices should be sited to directly open onto a pedestrian-oriented street. Buildings with multiple retail tenants should have numerous street entries.
5. Commercial centers should be designed to include pedestrian connections to surrounding neighborhoods.
6. Transit stops, where provided, should be conveniently located within each center and designed as an integral part of the site. Bus transit stops should include amenities that create an attractive and comfortable environment for transit users.



Stores oriented around a public plaza create a setting for pedestrian activity.



Street-level windows, architectural details and furniture provide interest along the street.



Transit stop designed for comfort and convenient access

BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Development should be designed to provide varied and interesting building façades and provide variety without creating a chaotic image. Facades should vary from one building to the next to avoid an overly unified frontage. Continuous covered walkways should be provided whenever possible.

Architectural Details

Provide architectural detailing that gives buildings human scale, visual interest, and distinctiveness through the following:

1. Use a variety of architectural elements such as arcades, recessed exterior balconies, changes in the façade treatment, window awnings, canopies, and other building elements that create visual interest through light and shadow.
2. Use special architectural features to accentuate building entries.
3. Avoid large blank walls at the building base along pedestrian walkways and entries. The building base should be articulated with changes in materials, color, and finishes, window and door patterns, and use of special building entrance features.
4. Coordinate the design of exterior elevations, roofs, and details to create a consistent overall design pattern within a buildings and development site.
5. Articulate wall and window surface places with setbacks, recesses, trim, reveals, or other design detail to add visual interest, scale, and changes in light and shadow to building façades.
6. Screen all utility boxes and rooftop equipment to provide attractive views on the street or from adjacent taller buildings. Avoid use of chain-link fences as rooftop screening.
7. Use high-quality finishes and materials that contribute to creating a unified building character and ensure a consistent design quality, particularly on surfaces adjacent to pedestrian spaces.



Architectural treatments at the corner define the entry area.



Walls and window surfaces articulated with recesses, trims, reveals and signage.

Build-to-Line

The build-to-line establishes a minimum percentage of building space (retail uses, public uses, or active spaces) facing the street with a minimum percentage of windows, doorways, and entry spaces facing onto the sidewalk. Activity spaces opening onto the street, enhance the pedestrian character of the street, provide for visual surveillance into the public realm, and increase the safety and security of the area.

The “Town Center” section of this chapter establishes a set of build-to-lines and their requirements for the town center. Commercial/ Mixed-Use sites in the village centers and neighborhood centers should also establish build-to-lines.

Materials

Materials used should reflect the style and overall character of buildings. Permanent, long-lasting, low-maintenance building materials are encouraged. These may include stone, stucco, brick, high-quality wood products, steel panel, or flange steel.

Use of Color

Colors should be used to bring together materials used in the design of the site and can complement the building architecture. Colors should be used to give distinct character to different buildings and different tenants within large building complexes.

Cornices

When used, cornices should have contrasting colors and materials to the wall surface areas next to them.

COMMUNITY DESIGN

Roofs Forms:

Roof form should be used to identify and articulate different buildings and distinguish different tenants within a larger building complex.

Towers

Tower elements may be incorporated into building designs to create identity when appropriate to the building aesthetic. They can provide a change in scale at the street corners or be sited in between buildings to provide focal points and transitions between spaces or buildings in a multi-tenant complex. Tower elements should be used sparingly and not conflict with the rhythm of vertical elements on the block.

Windows

The shape, size, and placement of windows are major design elements that help establish the style and character of a building's design. Windows, located at the ground floor, along major pedestrian commercial streets, should be large display windows that have a transparent quality, connecting the activities within to the pedestrian experience outside. On upper floors, window design elements such as shutters, canopies, recesses, and other elements should be used to add variety to the building design fronting the street.

Canopies, Awnings, and Arcades

Canopies, awnings, and arcades should be used along pedestrian streets to add an additional layer of variety, depth, and interest to building façades. Canopies, awnings, and arcades help identify and articulate major entries, cast shadows on the building façades, and may be used to carry additional signage.



Varied roof heights, tower elements, and arcades help differentiate tenants within a larger building complex.



Variation in the placement of windows, entries, arcades and awnings help articulate the building facade.

Signage

Signs should be designed as an extension of the architecture of a building or site and should complement the building or site materials, colors and rhythm of walls, windows, parapets, and other architectural design features. Signage should provide information and identification of shops and tenants, should not be used as advertisement, and are subject to the standards in Policy 6.14 and the standards and requirements of Section 17.54.170 of the *Placer County Zoning Ordinance*. Refer to Section 6.2.4 for signage design guidelines.

Wall signs located on multi-tenant centers shall be designed to be compatible with each other through the coordination of sign type, size, placement, illumination, color, and/or font.

Lighting

Refer to Section 6.2.5 for lighting design guidelines.



Signage should be designed as an extension of the architecture of a building or site.

CIRCULATION AND PARKING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Centers should be designed with internal circulation systems that allow for easy, efficient, and safe, slow speed vehicular movement with well-defined pedestrian and bicycle paths.

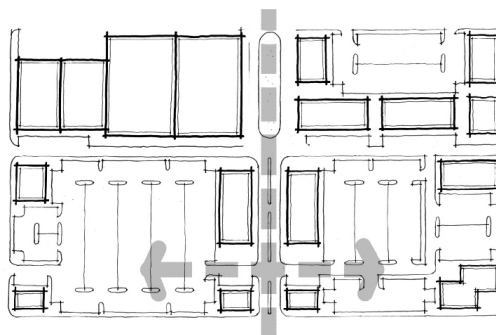
1. Parking areas should be designed with separate vehicular and pedestrian circulation paths and include traffic calming design features. Alternative surface materials are encouraged to differentiate pedestrian circulation paths.
2. On-site pedestrian amenities and bicycle parking should be provided at convenient locations to site destinations with direct, safe, and convenient access to adjoining path and trail systems.
3. Off-street parking should be located at the rear of buildings with separated walkways leading to the street and entryways.
4. Dispersion of parking into smaller units is encouraged.
5. Parking lots of commercial centers and public use areas should contain landscaped areas with large shade trees of sufficient size and shading to surrounding parking spaces (see Policy 6.25).
6. Shared parking arrangements and driveway access between adjoining commercial and office projects are encouraged. Parking standards may be relaxed to facilitate shared parking (see Policy 3.20 for parking reductions in Commercial/Mixed-use sites).



Parking areas should provide clearly defined pedestrian access, separated from vehicular traffic.



Place bicycle facilities, seating, and other pedestrian amenities convenient to public destinations.



Shared parking arrangements and driveways between adjoining commercial and office projects is encouraged.

7. Park and ride lots are provided primarily in the transit center and town center. Other commercial sites are also encouraged to provide smaller park and ride lots as a shared parking use incorporated into the overall parking design.
8. Service areas and loading functions should be integrated into the circulation pattern to minimize conflicts with vehicles and pedestrians. Service areas should be screened from public view with fencing, walls, and landscaping, or a combination of these elements.



Screen service area and mechanical equipment with landscaping, walls, or a combination of these.